

General Fred Grant On the Philippines

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MANILA, Feb. 2.—(Special Correspondence of The Bee.)—I met General Fred Grant today as he came in from the field to consult with General Otis about the operations in northern Luzon, and later on had a chat with him about his work and the people among whom he has been campaigning. General Grant came here almost immediately after leaving Porto Rico. I saw him last at Ponce, having traveled with him from San Juan around the island. He looks today the picture of health, and he tells me that he has been well ever since he came to the Philippines. He has been in the field and on the firing line since last July and has been campaigning in both the northern and southern parts of Luzon.

Our first words were about General Lawton, whose body by the time this letter is published will have been interred in the United States. Said General Grant:

"The death of General Lawton was a great loss to the army and I believe it was also a great loss to the Filipinos. General Lawton was their friend, although he fought them to the death. He was big-hearted and generous and he often cautioned me that I should be careful in my treatment of the people. He wanted the wrongdoers and the rebels punished, but that in such a way that the natives here might realize that the government was just and strong."

"You were not near General Lawton at the time of his death, were you, general?" I asked.

"No; I was in the mountains of the north. He was killed at San Mateo within a short distance of Manila. He was in the front and was as usual paying no attention to the bullets flying about him. It has seemed to me that he was not careful enough in such matters. He enjoyed the action of battle and was anxious to push the war to a finish. He thought it was almost ended and had advocated the increase of the army that peace might come just as soon as possible."

Among the Tagalogs.

"Tell me something, general, about the people among whom you have been campaigning?"

"You mean the Tagalogs, I suppose," replied General Grant. "There are, you know, many different races here with different characteristics. The Tagalogs are the strongest race in Luzon and they are the most civilized of the Filipinos. They make up the greater part of the population of Manila and there must be at least 1,500,000 of them on this island. They are the richest of the natives and they occupy the best lands."

"How about the holdings of lands here, general? I have thought the estates were all small?"

"That is so of nearly all the property held by the natives," replied General Grant. "There are some large estates which belong to the church and to foreigners. There are some also which belong to the mestizos, the descendants of natives who have intermarried with foreigners."

"Give me some idea of the Tagalogs, General Grant," said I. "How do they look?"

"The Tagalogs are much like the Malays in appearance," replied General Grant. "They have about the same features and many of the same characteristics. They are, I believe, a cross between the Malays and the aborigines. They are a cleanly people, both as to their persons and houses. They are not so well educated as I had supposed, considering their churches and other advantages. I have found, in fact, very little education outside of Manila and am trying to remedy this by establishing schools wherever I go."

Americanizing the Filipinos.

"How can you do this?" I asked. "I thought the whole island was in a state of war?"

"It is easily done wherever we have driven out the insurgents and have held the country for any length of time. What I have done as soon as I have taken possession of a municipality was to give its people a civil government, a police and schools. I would call the principal citizens together and tell them I wanted them to manage their affairs hereafter for themselves. I would have them choose an alcalde, or presidente, who should govern them as the head man of the town, and to appoint under him tenientes, who should be the heads of the divisions of the municipality. A municipality here includes more than the town itself. It is a district. You might compare it to one of our counties and the divisions in it to the townships. The presidente is the head of the whole and the tenientes are the heads of the townships. After these men have been elected they meet in council and pass ordinances as to taxes, revenues and the general government of the municipality. They appoint the police and collect the taxes on meat markets, etc. They issue all licenses and, in fact, govern the town."

"How do the people like it?"

"They say they are pleased with it and they take hold of it. It is very hard, however, to make them understand that the bulk of the taxes should not be given over to us. The Spaniards have so accustomed them to oppression and extortion that they cannot realize that we do not want to do as they did."

"Still, I am well pleased with the results," General Grant went on. "In Bacoor, for instance, where there are 14,000 people in the principality, I established a civil government in July and schools in September and October. The latter are doing very well

and the people seem to be well satisfied with the operations of their government. They appear to be grateful and I think I have persuaded them that we are their friends rather than their enemies."

"Do you really think, general," I asked, "that they can be made good American citizens?"

"Not at once," was the general's reply, "but I believe we can Americanize them much sooner than our people think. You must remember that this country has for years been overrun with a large class of brigands and thieves, who have intimidated the people, and it will be some time

out at us and ready to run if we showed any intention of coming near them. Some of the men were armed with bows and arrows and we had been warned that their arrows are poisoned. They did not attack us and we did not bother them."

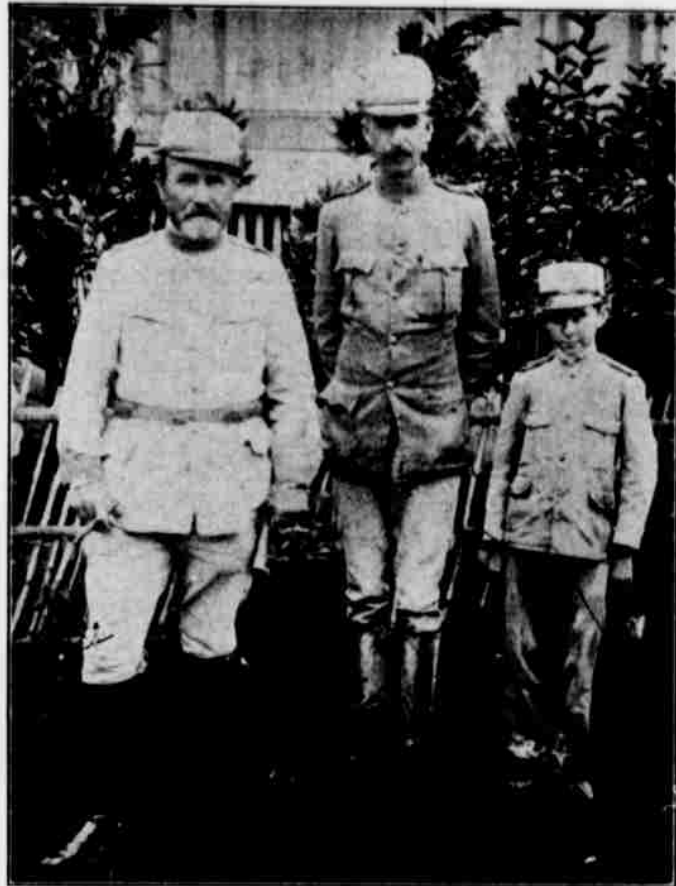
Our Philippine Dwarfs.

"What kind of looking people are the Negritos, general?" I asked. "They are a race of dwarfed negroes," replied General Grant. "The word 'negrito' means 'little negro.' The Negritos we saw in but few cases came up to my shoulder and some were pigmies in size. They have woolly hair, which stands out in curly masses over their heads, faces as black as those of the African negroes, thick lips and flat noses. Most of them were in breechcloths, the women wearing a strip about two feet long about the thighs and waist. Both sexes are puny and sickly looking. They have enormous stomachs, made so by their living

I feared at times my horse might break through."

Timber Resources.

"The most of the mountainous regions are covered with a dense growth of vegetation and those which have any depth of soil are heavily timbered. I saw large tracts of magnificent trees, including many varieties of valuable hard woods. I saw houses and furniture made of the wood; it is in many cases as hard as iron and it takes a polish like mahogany. I can't tell you the varieties. You must remember that I was more interested in watching out for the angry Filipinos who might be hid behind the trees with their guns than as to how the trees would cut up for lumber. I could see in passing that the timber is of immense value. About Subig bay, for instance, there are thousands of acres of virgin forest which have never been touched. This timber is easily gotten at, for the



GENERAL FRED GRANT AND SON OF GENERAL LAWTON

before they can be taught self-reliance and independence of thought. We shall first have to wipe out the thieves, show the people that they have rights, and that we intend to protect them in the exercise of them."

"Do you ever hear the people express regret that the Spaniards have been driven out?"

"No, I think the natives were glad to see the Spaniards go."

Campaigning Among the Negritos.

"Tell me something about the Negritos, general. I suppose you met with some of them while in the north?"

"Yes, I did," replied General Grant. "You see them occasionally in the Tagalog towns of the interior. They live in the woods and usually in the mountains. I came across a number of their little villages in crossing the mountains during my last campaign when I was chasing Agulnaldo. They are savages and their settlements are usually little more than hamlets. They build their houses in among the trees, raising them high off the ground on poles, and I saw many houses built high up in the branches of the trees. The houses are huts made of poles, with walls and roofs of grass and palm leaves. They take the palm leaves, which are long and wide, and plait them with the mountain grasses. The grass in that part of the country grows from six to ten feet high. It often reached above my head while I was riding through it on horseback. It is very strong, and, with the palm leaves, it can be woven into a very close mat."

"As we came to these villages the people scampered away like so many monkeys. They were afraid of us and usually hid themselves behind trees or rocks, peeping

almost entirely on roots, vegetables and fruits. The stomachs reminded me of the 'banana stomachs' of the peasant children of Porto Rico."

"Will we have any trouble in conquering them?"

"I see no reason why we should bother with them at all," replied the general. "They are comparatively few and are so weak mentally and physically that it would be difficult to make American citizens out of them. They are nearer to the Hottentot than the American Indian in the scale of possible civilization. All they would need would be a small reservation, and if well treated they would be no trouble."

"How about the Igorrotes?"

"I don't know much about them," said General Grant. "They are in the northeastern part of Luzon. My campaigning has been chiefly in the south and northwest. They are, I am told, entirely different from the Negritos, and though savage, are a fine race."

"What kind of a country did you find in northwestern Luzon, general?"

"The whole of Luzon is a land of mountains and valleys. The northern part is made up of ranges of mountains with fertile valleys between them. The valleys are usually well cultivated, being covered with rice fields and sugar plantations. Some of the mountains are tremendous. They rise up from the sea, in places sometimes reaching an altitude of 5,000 or 6,000 feet. They are of volcanic origin and the sides of many of them are covered with lava. In some sections there is a thin strata of limestone over the lava. This gives forth a hollow sound as you ride over it on horseback, and

bay will admit the largest steamers. They might, in fact, sail into it upside down if such a thing were possible, and their masts would not graze the bottom. It is, I am told, about 1,300 feet deep, and a great depth is found even at the shore line. The Oregon had to put out about fifty fathoms of chain when it came to anchor at a swinging distance of the land."

"The Spaniards appreciated the value of this timber," continued General Grant, "and were making arrangements to get it out to use in shipbuilding at the time the war began. They have graded a little railroad up one of the valleys and the rails lie beside the track ready to be laid. There is, I should say, about three or four miles of this roadbed."

"I should think the timber would offer some opportunities for American capital," said I.

"Yes, it would," replied General Grant. "The trees could be easily gotten down to the little rivers and into Subig bay, from where they could be shipped to any part of the world."

"How about the other parts of the country? What are the chances for agricultural development?"

"In some sections they are very good. The product of rice and sugar could be largely increased with scientific cultivation. The sugar lands can be made to yield a larger product per acre and with good machinery more sugar could be gotten out of the cane. A number of modern sugar mills might be established here to grind cane for the small planters. They could pay the people as much for the cane as they now get from raising and grinding it and still make a big profit off the increase in the product. There is more good land here than is generally supposed. I went over a low pass in the mountains north of Subig bay and found myself in a thriving agricultural valley inhabited by about 80,000 people. It was from twenty to thirty miles wide, having a rich soil and luxuriant crops. There is a great deal of rice and many coconut groves. The people raise water buffaloes, chickens and pigs. There are many such valleys in Luzon and also much undeveloped country. There is really no book which gives an adequate idea of the Philippines. Much of the country still awaits the advent of the prospector."

"How about the mines?" I asked.

"I cannot tell you. It is said that there are large deposits of coal and some gold, but so far I have seen none. The chief minerals are found on some of the other islands."

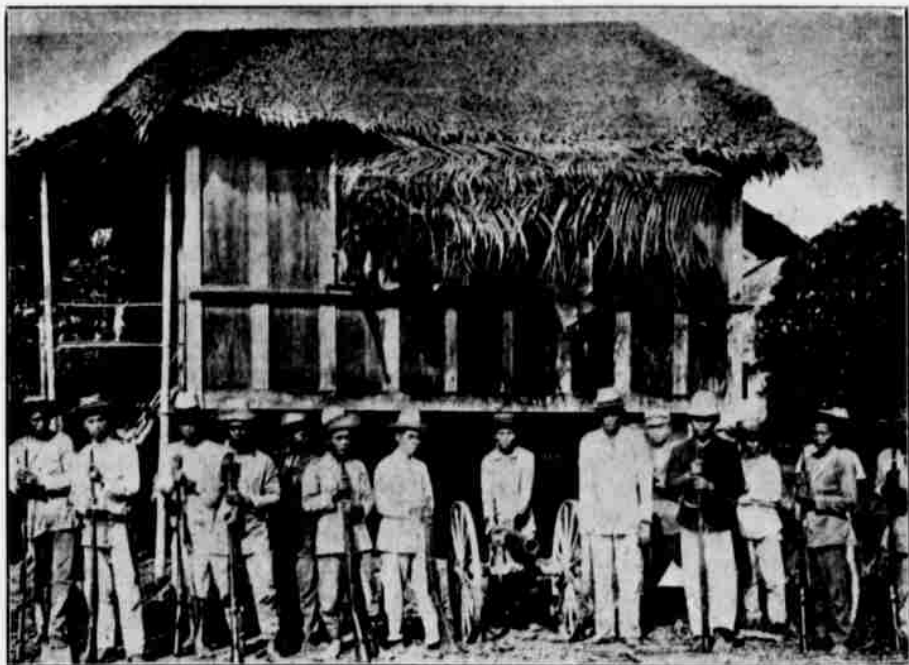
Worth the Cost.

"Do you think, general, that the islands are worth what they are costing us?"

"I think so, and even were they not I do not see how the United States could have taken any other course. If after mat-



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